

City of Corvallis

Salmon Response Plan

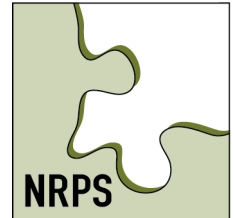
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Appendix 13

ESA Response Plan Fall 2002 Fact Sheet



City of Corvallis

Endangered Species Act Response Plan

Fall 2002 Fact Sheet

This fact sheet is an update on the City of Corvallis Endangered Species Act Response Plan. The City launched this effort in the Fall of 2000 to comply with National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) requirements for conservation of listed species following the designation of Chinook salmon in the upper Willamette River as threatened.

What is the Endangered Species Act?

Passed in 1973, the Federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) protects and conserves plant and animal species that are considered either threatened or in danger of becoming extinct. The ESA covers the plant and animal listing process, prohibited activities, enforcement and penalties for violations, exceptions to the Act and, importantly for this project, guidelines for protecting and conserving threatened species. Section 4(d) of the ESA outlines protective regulations for species, such as Chinook salmon, which are listed as threatened within the geographic area that includes the City of Corvallis. NMFS as the responsible regulating Federal Agency has prepared specific Section 4(d) Rule guidelines that protect listed salmonid habitat from further degradation (July 2000). Jurisdictions such as Corvallis must comply with the 4(d) Rules if they desire federal protection under the ESA.

Our Response Plan

The City is preparing a plan that follows the ESA 4(d) Rule. The City's ESA team is led by

ESA Response Plan Contact Information

To issue questions or comments about the Corvallis ESA Response Plan project, or to request information or be added to the project mailing list, please call the City of Corvallis Public Works Department at (541) 766-6916, or send an e-mail to salmon@ci.corvallis.or.us

the Public Works Department, in coordination with other City bureaus, elected and appointed leaders, residents and business owners. The goal is to develop a Section 4(d) Rule protection program that will be approved by NMFS for the protection of Chinook salmon, the only listed salmonids with habitat in the Corvallis Urban Growth Area.

Phase I activities assessed salmon habitat conditions in creeks and waterways within the entire Urban Growth Boundary. A "pathways and indicators" analysis was performed that assessed the impact City programs, plans and activities had on Chinook habitat. Among the data that we collected and analyzed were evidence of salmon spawning and rearing habitat, riparian cover, wetlands, shade, temperature, flow and other stream characteristics. City programs, plans and activities such as park and urban plans, land development, zoning, public utilities, operations and maintenance activities and fire protection services were evaluated in regard to their impact on fish habitat and water quality.

The analysis indicates that streams in Corvallis do not presently and most likely did not in the past contain habitat Chinook salmon require for spawning and rearing. However, when they migrate, Chinook salmon do have access and use the mouths of some of our streams for refuge during high water flows in the Willamette River.

The primary impact on salmon habitat from urban activities is the degradation of local water quality. This is diminished by contaminated runoff and siltation following storm events and also by high water temperatures during the summer. These streams then drain into the Willamette, where they have an impact on its quality.

NMFS has accepted the conclusions of our Phase I baseline habitat and existing conditions assessment and has given us the go-ahead to begin recovery/restoration planning. The goal of Phase II is to develop and rank strategies, develop options, and prepare a final plan to address properly functioning conditions for salmon. Phase II activities will include events in which we will ask for public comment on strategies, options and the draft and final plan.

Importance of the Response Plan

Chinook salmon play an important role in the economy and cultural heritage of our region. To preserve the health of this species, as well as the overall ecosystem, the City is committed to protecting the rivers and streams that are its habitat. This requires awareness of the many different ways by which we have an impact on streams and watersheds. This ESA Response Plan will identify and evaluate these impacts and determine how they may be avoided, reduced and/or minimized by changes in City plans, activities and regulations, as well as citizen behavior.

Even while the planning process is underway, the City is already taking steps to improve water quality and minimize impacts on salmon habitat. This project is building on the work of a number of activities already underway to improve water quality and habitat including the Stormwater Management Plan and the Goal 5 Significant Natural Features Scoping Project.

Project Timeline and Major Tasks

The City's ESA Response Plan has two distinct phases. Phase I, which focused on the identification of activities that negatively affect salmon habitat, was completed in Spring 2001 (see results of this work on the project Web site at <http://www.nrpsi.com/CorvallisESA/>).

Phase II, which identifies strategies and actions to minimize habitat degradation and improve local water quality conditions, is underway and expected to last through June 2003.

The specific tasks in Phase I included:

- ◆ Inventory and Data Collection. October 2000 - February 2001.

- ◆ Habitat Inventory and Risk Assessment Workshop. February 2001.
- ◆ Program Evaluation. March - May 2001.

Phase II work includes:

- ◆ Development of a Priority Pathway/Activity List. August - September 2002.
- ◆ Program Strategy Development. September - October 2002.
- ◆ Draft Program Options. October - November 2002.
- ◆ Strategic Plan Development. November 2002 - February 2003.
- ◆ Revision/ Adoption and Implementation. February - June 2003.

Methodology

The City of Corvallis and its consultants are using a "watershed-based" approach to the assessment of local environmental conditions, beginning with an analysis of ecosystem processes at the watershed level. These processes are then linked to specific habitat elements, resulting in ways to maintain, enhance, or rehabilitate those processes through changes and/or modifications in City plans, activities, and regulations.

The City will submit its proposed Response Plan to the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and other agencies for their review. The plan also will be published in the Federal Register, allowing for nation-wide public review and comment. After the review, the City will work with NMFS to respond to comments as needed and prepare a final plan that NMFS will certify.

How to Get Involved

Many citizens took part in Phase I. To continue this collaborative effort, there are a variety of ways to for the public to participate. To check our schedule, or be added to our mailing list, check the project website at <http://www.nrpsi.com/CorvallisESA/>, or call the Public Works Department at (541) 766-6916. You may also send your comments to us via e-mail, at salmon@ci.corvallis.or.us.